

REMARKS

In response to the non-final Office Action of May 30, 2007, applicants ask that all claims be allowed in view of the amendments to the claims and the following remarks. Claims 1-12 and 19-56 are pending, with claims 1-6 being independent. Claims 1-6 have been amended, and claims 13-18 have been cancelled. No new matter has been added.

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the Examiner's indication that claims 13-18 and 51-56 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In response, applicants have amended claims 1-6 to include the subject matter of dependent claims 13-18, respectively.

Claim Rejections—35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-6 and 27-50

Claims 1-6 and 27-50 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,521,775 (Noble) in view of JP 2001-068678 (Sera). As discussed above, claims 1-6 have been respectively amended to incorporate the subject matter of claims 13-18. Because dependent claims 13-18 recite allowable subject matter, claims 1-6 as amended are believed to be allowable. Claims 27-50 depend from one of claims 1-6 and are allowable at least for their dependency from one of claims 1-6. Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

Claims 7-12

Claims 7-12 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Noble and Sera in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2005/0030404 (Takahashi). Claims 7-12 depend from one of claims 1-6. Accordingly, claims 7-12 are allowable at least for the reasons discussed above with respect to claims 1-6. Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

Claims 19-22

Claims 19-22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Noble and Sera in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,300,735 (Yokono). Claims 19-22 depend from claims 3-6, respectively. Accordingly, claims 19-22 are allowable for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claims 3-6. Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

Claims 23-26

Claims 23-26 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Noble and Sera in view of JP 60198861 (Yoshimura). Claims 23-26 depend from claims 3-6, respectively. Accordingly, claims 23-26 are allowable for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claims 3-6. Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

Conclusion

Applicants submit that all claims are in condition for allowance.

It is believed that all of the pending issues have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this reply should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this reply, and the amendment of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment.

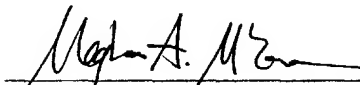
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No fee is believed to be due in connection with the filing of this paper on the Electronic Filing System (EFS). In the event that any fees are due, please apply any charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

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